

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed July 6, 2009, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration. Claims 1-11, 13-23, 26 and 27 were previously pending in this application. Claims 1, 15, 21 and 26 have been amended herein. Claim 27 has been canceled. As a result, claims 1-11, 13-23 and 26 remain pending for examination with claims 1, 15 and 26 being independent. No new matter has been added.

Overview of Embodiments

As an aid to the Examiner, before responding to the Office Action in detail, Applicants provide a brief overview of some exemplary embodiments of the invention.

The present application discloses a user interface framework that can be used to build componentized user interfaces for one or more computer applications or hosting environments (paragraphs 0028 and 0033-0034). In some embodiments, the framework is configured to load various interface plug-ins and to enable a user to interact with the computer applications or hosting environments using the interface elements provided by the plug-ins (paragraphs 0029 and 0033-0034).

In some embodiments, to enable the use of a plug-in in a computer application or hosting environment, an application specific adapter may be used to map interface elements of the plug-in to functions of the computer application or hosting environment (paragraph 0034). For example, if the plug-in provides a toolbar button and the user clicks on the toolbar button, the adapter signals to the computer application that a particular function should be performed.

In some further embodiments, a shell adapter may be used as an interface between the user interface framework and the various application specific adapters (FIG. 4 and paragraph 0033). In this manner, the plug-ins may be used in different computer applications or hosting environments with minimal coding changes (paragraph 0033).

The foregoing overview is provided solely for the convenience of the Examiner. It should be appreciated that each of the independent claims may not be limited in the manner described in the overview above. Therefore, the Examiner is requested not to rely upon the

overview above for determining whether each of the independent claims distinguishes over the prior art of record, but to do so based solely upon the language of the claims themselves and the arguments presented below.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. 103

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 26 and 27 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as purportedly being unpatentable over Ezekiel (U.S. Patent No. 5,625,783) in view of Rine ("Using adapters to reduce interaction complexity in reusable component-based software development," 1999) and further in view of Dobronsky (U.S. Patent No. 6,784,900). The Office Action further rejects claim 15 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as purportedly being unpatentable over Ezekiel in view of Rine and Shank ("Microsoft Office 2000/Visual Basic: Programmer's Guide," April 1999) and further in view of Dobronsky. Without acceding to the propriety of these rejections, Applicants have herein amended each of the independent claims 1, 15 and 26 for the sole purpose of advancing prosecution. In view of these amendments, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration.

I. Claim 1

As amended, claim 1 recites, "providing an interface between the one or more computer applications and the first and second plug-ins in order to utilize the second set of interface elements and the third set of interface elements, the interface comprising: a first application specific adapter that maps interface elements of the first plug-in to functions of the one or more computer applications; a second application specific adapter that maps interface elements of the second plug-in to functions of the one or more computer applications; and a shell adapter that interfaces between the framework and the first and second application specific adapters." None of the cited references discloses or suggests this limitation.

At page 4, the Office Action acknowledges that Ezekiel, as modified in view of Rine, does not teach an adapter that maps an interface element of a plug-in to a function of a computer

application. However, the Office Action alleges that Dobronsky does teach such an adapter. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Dobronsky relates to a method for adding on-demand graphic and other information to the toolbar area of a web browser (Dobronsky, Abstract). Particularly, Dobronsky describes first downloading and installing a plug-in that is capable of changing the toolbar zone of a browser, and then downloading a desired skin (i.e., a graphic file) to be applied to the toolbar zone (Dobronsky, column 3, lines 50-67, and column 4, lines 30 and 31). Dobronsky further describes using the plug-in to add a plurality of links to the links line of the toolbar (Dobronsky, column 2, lines 11-27). Both the skin and the links can be downloaded from a service website and can be customized by the user of the web browser (Dobronsky, column 2, lines 37 and 38, column 5, lines 33-41 and column 6, lines 1-11).

The plug-in described in Dobronsky is installed directly in a web browser to effect changes in the toolbar zone of the web browser (Dobronsky, Abstract and columns 2, lines 15-19). Indeed, Dobronsky describes a plug-in as any program that can function in cooperation with a browser, and that can effect changes in the functions and/or appearance of the browser (Dobronsky, column 3, lines 49-53). There is no mention of any adapter that serves as an interface between the plug-in and the web browser. Therefore, Dobronsky fails to teach or suggest any adapter that maps an interface element of a plug-in to a function of a computer application, as required in claim 1.

For at least these reasons, claim 1 patentably distinguishes over the alleged combination of the references, and it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claim 1 be withdrawn.

Although not required to overcome the rejection, Applicants have herein amended claim 1 to recite at least some of the components that make up the interface between the plug-ins and the computer applications in accordance with some embodiments. As amended, claim 1 recites, "an interface between the one or more computer applications and the first and second plug-ins . . . , the interface comprising: a first application specific adapter that maps interface elements of

the first plug-in to functions of the one or more computer applications; a second application specific adapter that maps interface elements of the second plug-in to functions of the one or more computer applications; and a shell adapter that interfaces between the framework and the first and second application specific adapters.” The cited references, even if combined, fail to teach or suggest these limitations. For example, the cited references, even if combined, fail to teach or suggest “a shell adapter that interfaces between the framework and the first and second application specific adapters,” as recited in claim 1.

For at least these additional reasons, claim 1 patentably distinguishes over the alleged combination of the cited references.

Claims 2-11, 13 and 14 depend from claim 1 and are allowable for at least the same reasons. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejections of these claims be withdrawn.

II. Claim 15

As amended, claim 15 recites, “providing an interface between the one or more computer applications and the plug-in in order to utilize the second set of interface elements, the interface comprising: an application specific adapter that maps interface elements of the plug-in to functions of the one or more computer applications; and a shell adapter that interfaces between the framework and the application specific adapter.” For reasons that should be clear from the foregoing discussions of the references, the cited references, even if combined, fail to teach or suggest these limitations. Therefore, claim 15 patentably distinguishes over the cited references, and it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claim 15 be withdrawn.

Claims 16-23 depend from claim 15 and are allowable for at least the same reasons. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejections of these claims be withdrawn.

III. Claim 26

As amended, claim 26 recites, “providing a first interface between the plug-in and a first computer application or hosting environment, wherein the first interface maps interface elements of the plug-in to functions of the first computer application or hosting environment,” “providing a second interface between the plug-in and a second computer application or hosting environment, wherein the second interface maps interface elements of the plug-in to functions of the second computer application or hosting environment,” and “providing a shell adapter interface between the user interface framework and the first interface and the second interface, whereby the framework is configured to provide the first set of interface elements in conjunction with the first computer application or hosting environment and the second computer application or hosting environment.” For reasons that should be clear from the foregoing discussions of the references, the cited references, even if combined, fail to disclose or suggest these limitations. Therefore, claim 26 patentably distinguishes over the cited references, and it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claim 26 be withdrawn.

General Comments on Dependent Claims

Because each of the dependent claims depends from a base claim that is believed to be in condition for allowance, Applicants believe that it is unnecessary at this time to argue the further distinguishing features of all of the dependent claims. However, Applicants do not necessarily concur with the interpretation of the dependent claims as set forth in the Office Action, nor do Applicants concur that the basis for the rejection of any of the dependent claims is proper. Therefore, Applicants reserve the right to specifically address in the future the further patentability of the dependent claims not specifically addressed herein.

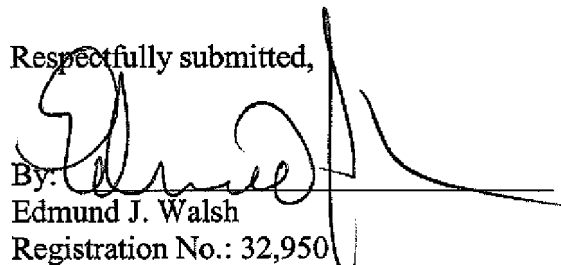
CONCLUSION

A Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. The Examiner is requested to call the undersigned at the telephone number listed below if this communication does not place the case in condition for allowance to discuss any outstanding issues relating to the allowability of this application.

If the response is not considered timely filed and if a request for an extension of time is otherwise absent, Applicants hereby request any necessary extension of time. Applicants believe no fee is due with this response. However, if a fee is due, please charge Deposit Account No. 23/2825 under Docket No. M1103.70436US00 from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

Dated: October 6, 2009

Respectfully submitted,



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